Chriſtian Submiſſion, under ſolemn Providences, conſidered, and urged.

A SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE

Much lamented Death of

Mr. JOHN JARROLD;

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE,

OCTOBER the 23d, 1775.

IN THE 31ſt. YEAR OF HIS AGE:

PREACHED THE LORD'S DAY FOLLOWING,

OCTOBER the 29th,

TO THE CONGREGATION OF PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,

At WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK.

By JOHN PALMER.

I. *Sam.* iii. 18. *laſt* cl. *It is the LORD: let him do what ſeemeth him good.*

Pſalm xxxix. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; becauſe thou didſt it.*

Publiſhed at the earneſt Deſire of the Relations.

COLCHESTER:
Printed by W. KEYMER, 1776.

SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE

Much-lamented Death of

Mr. JOHN JARROLD;

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE,

OCTOBER the 23d, 1775,

IN the 31st YEAR of his AGE:

PREACHED THE LORD'S DAY FOLLOWING,

OCTOBER the 29th,

TO THE CONGREGATION OF PROTESTANT

DISSENTERS,

AT

ATTLEBOROUGH, in SUFFOLK.

By JOHN SKEMMER.

[illegible] 18. Love [illegible] the LORD: [illegible]

[illegible] Acts 9. Let [illegible] Spiritual [illegible]

[illegible] at the earnest Desire of the Relations.

COLCHESTER:

Printed by W. KEYMER, 1776.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following plain Sermon was compoſed, and preached, without the leaſt view to publication; to which the AUTHOR had a ſtrong diſinclination.

The repeated earneſt ſolicitations of the near RELATIVES of his deceaſed Friend, out of regard to his MEMORY, have prevailed on him to let it appear in the world.—— He hopes that the veil of chriſtian CANDOR will cover its many imperfections: and that the divine bleſſing may render it a means of religious improvement.

Woodbridge.
December 1ſt, 1775.

My Chriſtian Friends.

A Very ſolemn, awakening, and deeply affecting diſpenſation of providence now calls me to addreſs myſelf unto you: the Lord ſtrengthen and aſſiſt me in the preſent ſervice; and may divine grace prove all-ſufficient for you, and me!

The ſovereign Lord of all has made a moſt awful breach among us: he has ſeen fit to take away, in the midſt of his days, our truly valuable, and juſtly eſteemed, friend, Mr. JOHN JARROLD, the Father of a young and tender family; and a member of this church, who according to outward appearance promiſed fair for many years of uſefulneſs; and the moſt pleaſing expectations were formed of his continuance with us to this end. At once our hopes are blaſted; and in his death, which occaſions general concern and grief, we have a moſt ſtriking

ſtriking proof, that, (a) 'verily every 'man at his beſt eſtate is altogether va-'nity'. ——His life was in every reſpect truly deſirable; and every circumſtance tends to aggravate ſorrow, if we judge according to ſenſe: but we are to remember the Lord has given this heavy ſtroke, who does all things in infinite wiſdom; and gives no account of any of his matters.

It is indeed a myſtery in providence not to be unfolded in this world: but what we know not now, we ſhall know hereafter.

We therefore ſhould be principally concerned that the Lord would ſanctify his removal to the ſpiritual good of the living; enable us to improve from it, and to be ſubmiſſive to his all-diſpoſing will under it.

The paſſage of ſcripture therefore our chriſtian friend, his mourning RELICT, informed me has been a means of ſup-

(a) Pſal. xxxix. 5. laſt clauſe.

port

port to her during his dangerous illneſs, and under her loſs of him; and which has alſo been much upon my own mind, will afford ſuitable matter of meditation on this melancholly occaſion.——

Would now then deſire your very ſerious and attentive regard to what may be ſpoken from thoſe words you have recorded.

A SERMON, &c.

PSALM. XLVI. 10. former clauſe.

Be ſtill, and know that I am GOD.

THIS is the language of the Lord himſelf to us his creatures, his ſinful creatures, in his word; and repeatedly by his infinitely wiſe and over-ruling providence. Thus he calls upon us to give glory to his name by hearty acknowlegement of him as ſovereign Lord of all, and by humble entire acquieſcence in all his diſpenſations. Theſe are various, and different in their nature: But, (a) 'all the paths of the Lord 'are mercy and truth unto ſuch as keep his co-'venant, and his teſtimonies." The Temper of mind then inculcated, and the truth repreſented in the words, may be deſigned to have reference to God's people both when he ſurrounds them with his mercy, and works deliverance for them;

(a) Pſal. xxv. 10.

and when he comes out in a way of ſolemn viſitation.

In the former ſenſe they ſeem primarily uſed in this pſalm. God is therefore ſpoken of as the refuge and ſtrength of his People, a very preſent help in trouble, as affording matter and ground of confidence in him, at all times, and under all circumſtances. The ſafety and happineſs of his church and people under thoſe of the moſt diſtreſſing nature, and amidſt all their enemies, is repreſented from God's preſence with them, his providence over them, and his promiſes to them; whence may be inferred his readineſs to manifeſt the appearances of his providence, and the ſupports of his grace, which may juſtly encourage and ſtrengthen their faith and hope in him in the darkeſt ſeaſons. ver. 5. 'God is in the midſt of 'her, ſhe ſhall not be moved; God ſhall help 'her, and that right early." Mention is then made from ver. 6. of the wonderful works he wrought by his almighty power with a view to his church and people's deliverance and comfort. Upon this come in the words of the text,

'Be ſtill, and know that I am God.'

Taken in this connection, they may be conſidered as ſpoken for the encouragement of his people, and by way of quickning to praiſe of him, and truſt in him, amidſt all enemies, under the deepeſt diſtreſſes, and heavieſt trials. Conſider, as if it had been ſaid, 'what I the omnipotent 'Jehovah, am able to do for you, and let this 'tend to ſilence your fears, deliver you from deſ

'pondency

' pondency of ſpirit, and revive your hopes amidſt
' all your burdens, cares, and ſorrows, that your
' truſt may be in the Lord alone, in whom is
' everlaſting Strength'.

Some take the words as the language of God to the enemies of his people. ' Be ſtill', dare not to ſtir, to riſe againſt them, and exalt yourſelves over them; but, ' know', from what I have done, that ' I am God', the omnipotent Jehovah, able to deliver them out of your hand; and that, as I have been, I will continue to be their defence: it therefore follows in the latter clauſe, ' I will be exalted among the Heathen; ' I will be exalted in the Earth'.——The words however may be juſtly accommodated to afflictive and diſconſolate circumſtances; and they may moſt juſtly be urged under mourning bereaving providences, by which God deprives of the neareſt and deareſt relatives and friends, and thus ſtrikes our earthly comforts dead. To thoſe thus particularly exerciſed his language is, ' Be ſtill, and know that I am God'. This truth, impreſſed on the mind and heart, has been a means of reconciling his people to the divine diſpoſals under the darkeſt diſpenſations, and moſt grievous loſſes; and of handing in ſuitable ſupport.——Thus, through the influences of the divine Spirit attending them, may we happily find them bleſſed to us.

In further conſidering the words would propoſe, by divine aſſiſtance, doing theſe two things.

First. Attend to the Temper to be ſought after, and cultivated, under ſolemn providences, intimated by the expreſſion, 'Be ſtill'.

Secondly. Conſider how the true Knowledge of God may prove a happy means to the exerciſe of this becoming chriſtian Temper; 'and know that I am God'. ——————

First. Let us attend to the Temper to be ſought after, and cultivated, under the moſt ſolemn providences, intimated by the expreſſion; 'Be ſtill'.—————— It may be proper under this head to conſider what we are not to underſtand as intended by this exhortation; and then what may juſtly be denoted by, and implied in it. ——————

First. Let us conſider what we are not to underſtand as intended by this exhortation, 'Be 'ſtill'. —————— It is not then to be underſtood, I would obſerve, as giving the leaſt encouragement to an indolent, thoughtleſs, careleſs ſpirit: this is not to be indulged, but watched, and guarded againſt. We are not ſo to be ſtill, as to remain unconcerned about what befalls us or ours; as to be deſtitute of thought and care either as to God's hand therein, or the ends to be anſwered to ourſelves, and others, thereby. The indulgence of ſuch a temper, inſtead of being agreeable to the will of God, would be intirely contrary to it. ——————

To be ſtill is not to be regardleſs of the hand of the Lord in the providences which affect us, or of the ends to be anſwered to ourſelves thereby.

by. Stillneſs in this reſpect is an evidence of the prevalence of a carnal mind and heart: it would manifeſt great ignorance and blindneſs, as, though what took place reſpecting us, was the effect of mere accident, and not permitted or ordered by infinite wiſdom; and as if it was a matter of no moment whether we gained good, or not, by ſuch providences. Thus to be ſtill would be highly to God's diſhonour, and greatly prejudicial to our beſt intereſt. (a) 'Is there evil in a City', in particular Churches, in a Family, and reſpecting individuals? 'and the Lord hath not done 'it'? moſt certainly not: his hand therefore is to be acknowledged in all; and we ſhould be concerned to enquire what important ends may be anſwered from our being exerciſed in ſuch and ſuch a manner.

We ſhould not ſo look to ſecond cauſes, as to forget the firſt. Diſeaſes and death are intirely at the command of the Lord: we ſhould not therefore ſo be ſtill as to overlook his will and hand therein, or be inattentive to his voice; but ſhould willingly acknowledge, and diligently hearken to, it. In every ſolemn providence he thus calls to us, (b) 'Hear ye the rod, and who 'hath appointed it'. Wherefore we ſhould be ready to adopt Job's language, (c) 'I will ſay un- 'to God, do not condemn me: ſhew me where- 'fore thou contendeſt with me'. ——

I would obſerve again, to be ſtill is not deſigned in the leaſt to intimate that we are to remain unaffected with what doth nearly concerns,

(a) Amos iii. 6. (b) Mic. vi. 9. (c) Job. x. 2.

us,

us, and ours. We are not to ſtand as it were unmoved; this would manifeſt Inſenſibility, inſtead of the proper influence of Religion. Chriſtianity knows of no ſuch ſtoical Apathy under the moſt grievous ſufferings and loſſes, to remain as though deſtitute of paſſion, and void of the tender feelings of nature; theſe are allowed, but reſtrained, by a due regard to the Religion of Jeſus. This does not forbid ſorrow on occaſions which affect in the moſt tender part. (a) 'Jeſus himſelf wept at the grave of his friend Laxarus'. His Religion forbids the indulgence of ſorrow in any immoderate degree, ſo as to be ſwallowed up by it, and rendered unfit for the duties and ſervices to which we are called. Providence affords the occaſion, and even calls to the ſhedding the tears of love and friendſhip, when by death it diſſolves the moſt intimate earthly bonds, and ſeparates the deareſt Relatives. Here Nature requires, and Chriſtianity does not forbid, but is deſigned to moderate, ſorrow.

Secondly. Let us next conſider what may juſtly be denoted by, and implied in, the exhortation, 'Be ſtill'. The Temper of mind here deſigned, and exhorted to, is ſuch a temper as becomes the Man, as adorns the chriſtian character, and ſhews the influence of divine grace in the heart. It forbids then hard thoughts of, murmurings and complainings againſt God, on account of his diſpenſations; but it denotes Humility of mind, and Submiſſion of ſoul to the divine will, under them.

(a) John. xi. 35.

The

The exhortation, 'Be ſtill', forbids entertaining hard thoughts of God, or indulging murmurings and complainings againſt him, on account of his diſpenſations. When things go contrary to our expectations, when we are exerciſed with ſevere afflictions, when we are touched in the moſt ſenſible part, and deprived of thoſe moſt dear to us, and, as we think, moſt needed by us, how apt is the heart of man to rebel? Are not hard thoughts of God apt to ariſe, and we give into unbecoming complainings of him, and his dealings with us? Would we be ſtill then, as becomes the Chriſtian, ſuch thoughts and complainings are to be checked at their firſt riſing, and not to be willingly countenanced. It becomes us to be ſilent, and not indulge a thought, nor ſpeak a word, againſt the Lord who does all things wiſely and well, how contrary ſoever to us, or hard we may be ready to think ſome of them to be; for the Lord of the whole earth muſt, and will, do right: but, alas! we are poor weak ſhort-ſighted Creatures.———As Dr. Watts then excellently expreſſes the temper of mind denoted in being ſtill, let Chriſtians charge it on themſelves, when turbulent paſſions are apt to ariſe, and prevail, eſpecially under the affecting loſs of choice earthly comforts, to ſay,

(a) 'Tis God that lifts our comforts high,
Or ſinks them in the grave;
He gives, and (bleſſed be his name!)
He takes but what he gave.

(a) Watts's Hymns. B. 1. H. 5. ver. 3. 4.

Peace

Peace, all our angry paſſions then,
Let each rebellious ſigh
Be ſilent at his ſovereign will,
And ev'ry murmur die.

Again, I obſerve the Temper here exhorted to intimates Humility of mind, and Submiſſion of ſoul. It intimates Humility of mind. 'Be ſtill', be humble under the rod. Humble thoughts of ſelf will tend to keep down hard thoughts of God. The more lowly in our own eyes the more will God's ways appear to be juſt, and equal. The more humble, the more do we honor the Lord under the rod: he would not give it, if he did not ſee occaſion for it; but occaſion is there reſpecting us all, wherefore he ſhould touch us with the lighter or ſeverer ſtrokes of it; and this will he do as in infinite wiſdom he ſees moſt neceſſary, and proper. There is reaſon for all to ſay, 'He afflicts us leſs than our iniqui-'ties deſerve:' therefore let us ſo be deſirous to be ſtill, as 'to humble ourſelves under his mighty 'hand; and in due time he will lift us up'.

It intimates therefore Submiſſion to his wiſe, all diſpoſing will. It is under the moſt painful diſpenſations, (a) 'to hold our peace', as Aaron did. From the heart alſo to join with Job in his acknowledgement. (b) 'What, ſhall we receive 'Good at the hand of God? and ſhall we not 'receive Evil'. (c) 'Naked came I out of my mo-'ther's womb, and naked ſhall I return thi-'ther'. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath

(a) Lev. x. 3. (b) Job ii. 10. (c) Job. i. 21.

taken

'taken away: bleſſed be the name of the Lord', 'Be ſtill', is thus to be reſigned to the divine will. Let it then be our unfeigned language; 'not my 'will, but thine, O Lord, be done'. Let us therefore ſeek after grace from Chriſt; for without him we can do nothing. Let us ſeek after a conſtant ſupply of his Spirit; that, under his influences, we may exerciſe and cultivate this temper under every diſpenſation, as moſt uſeful to the Chriſtian, ſince it may have a tendency to promote his real quietneſs and peace; prove recommendatory to Religion, and moſt honourable to God. ———

Secondly. As the next general head propoſed, let us conſider how the true Knowledge of God may prove a happy means to the exerciſe, and improvement, of this becoming chriſtian temper; 'and know that I am God'.

The expreſſion hath a majeſtic and ſtriking ſound; and, when the truth is accompanied home with a divine power to the heart, it will have its proper influence. 'Be ſtill, and know that I 'am God'. Well may this awe us into ſilence under all the rebukes of his providence. ——— It is happy to be bleſſed with this knowledge, to have an abiding ſenſe of it, and to live under its prevailing influence: we ſhould therefore ſtop to conſider, and reflect upon, thoſe things, reſpecting the knowledge that he is God, which may tend to reſtrain our paſſions, to humble us, and render us ſubmiſſive to his will. With this view.

First. Know and conſider that he is the ſovereign Lord of all, who hath the undoubted right of diſpoſal of us, and ours.——He is Jehovah the Lord of the whole earth. He is the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh. All creatures are in his hand to do with them as ſeemeth him good, according to the counſel of his own will, and as may be moſt for his own glory.

Now what finite creature is there that hath a right to diſpute his will? (a) 'All the inhabitants 'of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he 'doeth according to his will in the Army of hea-'ven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: 'and none can ſtay his hand; or ſay unto him, 'what doeſt thou'? (b) 'Behold, he taketh away: 'who can hinder him? who will ſay unto him, 'what doeſt thou'? He only taketh his own property, what he hath a ſovereign right to. He taketh but what he gave. From him we derived our Being; in him we live, move, and have our Being: and he hath a right to demand away our breath, whenever he pleaſeth. From his kind hand, through his indulgent providence, we receive preſent comforts and enjoyments; ſurely then he may call for his own whenever it is his pleaſure; and what he calls for from us, it becomes us ſubmiſſively to reſign. It is the Lord by his providence brings us into particular relations in life, and renders us pleaſant and comfortable in thoſe relations: certainly then he may diſ-

(a) Dan. iv. 35. (c) Job. ix. 12.

ſolve

ſolve thoſe relations whenever, and however, in infinite wiſdom he ſees beſt.

He ſometimes cuts ſhort Lives the moſt deſireable: he takes away the DUTIFUL SON, the LOVING BROTHER, the AFFECTIONATE HUSBAND, the TENDER PARENT, the KIND MASTER, the AGREEABLE COMPANION, and SINCERE FRIEND: might not this juſtly be ſaid of our dear deceaſed Friend? and as to ourſelves does not this make his loſs the greater? moſt certainly it does: but ſhall we murmur and repine, becauſe he is taken from us? this would be to offend againſt God. He thus manifeſts that he is ſupreme Lord: and it becomes us to be dumb, and not open our mouths, becauſe he has taken him to himſelf.

Secondly. Know, and conſider, he is that God againſt whom we have all rebelled; and at whoſe hands we have juſtly forfeited every mercy. We have all ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God. We are concluded under the law as tranſgreſſors. We have proved rebellious children, and are continually chargeable with offences againſt the great, good, and holy God. 'Who 'of us can underſtand his errors'? How unmindful are we of God, our conſtant Preſerver, and bountiful Benefactor? How naturally deſtitute of ſuitable diſpoſitions of heart towards him? How full of enmity, inſtead of love? How has ingratitude filled the heart, and diſobedience the life? We have thus juſtly forfeited every mercy,

and preſent enjoyment. Was he to deprive us of all, he would ſhew himſelf but righteous. We have even forfeited our ſouls themſelves into the hands of juſtice. Now, inſtead of demanding theſe of us as he juſtly might, and have doomed them to endleſs perdition, doth he give further ſpace to attend to their immortal intereſt? Doth he call us to conſider our ways, and be wiſe? Doth he wait to be gracious unto us; reveal a glorious method for Sinners Recovery and Salvation; and by his word providence and Spirit beſeech us to be reconciled through the All-atoning blood of Jeſus, through whom alone our peace can be made with the offended Majeſty of heaven, and earth? Doth he thus ſhew his concern for the everlaſting welfare of our precious immortal ſouls?—— And as to our bodies, though he might juſtly leave us deſtitute of every outward bleſſing, doth he favor us with many things with a view to our preſent proviſion, eaſe, and comfort? Is this the Lord's dealing towards us his rebellious creatures? when he doth demand from us any dear and valuable enjoyment it becomes us to be ſilent; ſince he might ſtrip us of all, and demand even our ſouls of us: and, if cut off in our ſins, they muſt be miſerable for ever.—— Oh! conſider this you, in this Aſſembly, who are healthy young and ſtrong, but ready to put off the concerns of your ſouls to an uncertain hereafter. Now is the accepted time; now is the day of Salvation: it may be now, or never.

You

You have had a moſt ſtriking inſtance that the moſt promiſing circumſtances are no Security againſt the attack of raging diſeaſe, and ſtroke of death itſelf. O that this Providence might be ſanctified to the awakening ſuch as have been hitherto careleſs and ſecure, to bring them in earneſt to ſeek after true Faith in Chriſt, and Repentance unto life; before they come to lie upon a ſick and dying bed, when they may have enough to do to graple with diſorders of body, and the agonies of diſolving nature: thus ſhall you have hope your ſouls will be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus: and the death of our dear friend may prove for the life of your ſouls. Pray then, earneſtly pray it may be thus bleſſed; and thus indeed the Lord will be glorified.——

Thirdly. Know, and conſider, he is God, an all-ſufficient Good, who can ſupply our want of thoſe who were moſt valued by us, and uſeful to us. The Lord, by removing from us thoſe we might be ready to think moſt uſeful, and on whom we might be moſt apt to place our dependance, deſigns to convince us of all creatures inſufficiency, whatever high thoughts we may be ready to entertain of them; and that he is above all inſtruments. Creatures can only be what the Lord makes them to be unto us: but he can be All and in All, whatever we can deſire, or want. If a God in Chriſt is our All-ſufficiency, we cannot fail of being comfortable, and happy.

Vanity and inſufficiency are wrote in legible characters upon every creature; when we may

be

be moſt ready to look to creatures, they may fail our expectations; and when we may count on happineſs from them, they may at once be taken from us: but though they die, the All-ſufficient Jehovah lives; and he will not fail the expectations of thoſe who look unto him, and reſt in him, as their only ſupreme happineſs.—— Can he then ſupply the want of every earthly comfort, and fill the ſoul with good as its all-ſufficiency? let this tend to ſtill your paſſions, and bring you to reſignation unto his will. Take not up with any created good. (a) 'Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrills': for wherein is he to be accounted of? There is no dependance to be placed on any creature for comfort and happineſs, ſince he is mortal, and muſt depart at the divine Summons. Let the Lord himſelf be looked to, and reſted in, as your all-ſufficient good. ——

Fourthly. Know, and conſider, he is that God who is the covenant God and father of Believers; does all in infinite mercy, and very faithfulneſs unto them; and hath promiſed, and will give, divine ſupport.

As to thoſe who through grace are enabled with the heart to believe in, and ſerve, the Lord Chriſt, they are reconciled to God through him, and are brought into ſpecial covenant relation to the Lord: however therefore he may ſee fit as to them to diſſolve earthly relations, this is a relation which can never be broke, but ſhall ever

(a) Iſaiah ii. 22.

continue

continue. Whilſt in the world therefore they ſhall have tribulation: in Jeſus they have peace. Under ſolemn bereaving providences this may well be the Believer's hope and comfort. When then, Believers, you are exerciſed in this manner, conſider who hath done it, your God, father and friend: therefore be ſilent, indulge not a murmuring word. Doubtleſs what may be moſt contrary to nature, he means in mercy to his people. What he thus does he ſees needful for them, and will make to work for their good: he certainly does all in very faithfulneſs, and will manifeſt himſelf that God who is a covenant keeping, and promiſe-performing God. Though he cauſe grief unto you, he will have compaſſion according to the multitude of his tender mercies. He is able, and willing, to make all grace abound towards you for your ſupport. The Hand which ſtrikes the blow, is able to ſuſtain under it: therefore 'Be ſtill'; look to him to be your all-ſufficient help, and let your only truſt be in him.

Fifthly. Know, and conſider, he is that God who will be the eternal complete happineſs of his people.

A very relieving conſideration this under deep ſorrow for the loſs of thoſe we have reaſon to hope lived, and died, in the Lord. The thought may well teach us to be ſilent under ſuch ſtrokes, though heavy to us. What is thus grievous to us, was in mercy to them. They are gone from us, but taken to the enjoyment of their God and Saviour; who was the deſire and delight of their ſouls:

ſouls: they are delivered from this preſent evil world, and admitted to be with Chriſt which is far better: they are freed from all ſins and ſorrows, and entred into that reſt which remaineth for the people of God: therefore 'Be ſtill'; be gone every murmuring ſigh: their removal is to our grief, but their great joy. ——— This we have ground to conclude reſpecting OUR DEAR DECEASED FRIEND; which may juſtly tend to reconcile you his near and DEAR RELATIVES to the awful providence as to us: You ſorrow not as others which have no hope. ———

Early convictions, with which he was favoured, were renewed and ſtrengthned, and there is reaſon to hope ended in hearty converſion. He was led to ſee his need as a guilty Sinner of Redemption through the blood of Chriſt; and this was his delightful theme. He was enabled a little above (a) two years paſt to give up himſelf in a public manner unto the Lord, and to this Church by the will of God. ——He then thus expreſſed in writing his need of Salvation, and to whom alone he looked for it.

'I ſee myſelf a Sinner, ſays he: when I look 'to the Law, I ſee no hope. I am led by a 'happy neceſſity to fly to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt 'as for my life; and I ſee no other hope: as ſuch 'would be daily looking up to God, by humble prayer, to beſtow upon me Faith, precious 'Faith on the Lamb of God, which taketh away 'the ſins of the world; even that Faith which

(a) July 1773.

worketh

'worketh by Love to God, and, as an evidence 'of its being true and genuine, may be produc-'tive of proper fruit in the life'.

His Faith I truſt was evidenced by an upright converſation. ——— In the former part of his laſt illneſs, when his mind was moſt calm and compoſed, he expreſſed to me, 'his firm reli-'ance on the ſure foundation, the Lord Jeſus 'Chriſt, the rock of ages, and that he looked 'for Salvation no where elſe; that Chriſt was 'indeed precious unto his ſoul; and that he de-'ſired to be reſigned to the whole will of God'. ——Thus there is reaſon to conclude his exchange is infinitely for the better; that he is early removed from the CHURCH MILITANT to the CHURCH TRIUMPHANT. Let this conſideration alleviate your ſorrows: remember God thus calls to you; 'Be ſtill, and know that I am God'.———

Having thus gone through the two general heads of diſcourſe propoſed, would cloſe with ſome improvement. ———

Firſt. We may juſtly infer one reaſon, where-fore man proves ſo rebellious againſt the provi-dence of God; it is becauſe God is no more known, or conſidered, in the heart. —— What more unreaſonable than for finite creatures to ar-raign the divine proceedings! yet is it not too common? Sinners are apt to rebel, not only a-gainſt the Law of God, becauſe it is holy, juſt, and good; but againſt many of the divine diſpen-ſations as hard and ſevere, either in the perſonal afflictions with which they are exerciſed, or the

loſſes they are called to ſuſtain. They have not an heart—affecting ſenſe of the divine Greatneſs, and Goodneſs, and of their own ſinfulneſs; and therefore are they ready to murmur, and find fault. Having no true knowledge of a covenant God in Chriſt, they find their ſorrows almoſt inſupportable, and may be ready to fly to inſufficient methods, inſtead of having recourſe unto God by prayer; but theſe will have no tendency to alleviate ſorrow in a right manner, and only increaſe guilt. ——— The more we eye God, and look to him, the more, through his grace, may we hope to have the rebellion of the heart ſubdued; and to be divinely upheld amidſt all ſorrows. Let us then more frequently, and ſeriouſly meditate on what the Lord is, on the relation in which we ſtand to him, on what he hath a right to do with us, and ours; and ſeek, through the Spirit, our meditations may have abiding influence, and prove profitable.

Secondly. We may juſtly infer one rule, by which to judge whether we are truly ſubmiſſive under trying diſpenſations, or not: this is to be judged of from our being influenced to ſubmiſſion, by the true knowledge of God.

Are we only outwardly quiet and ſtill, becauſe we muſt be ſo, and would appear ſo to others; though we can inwardly, without reluctance, rebel, murmur, and find fault? If this is the caſe, it is forced ſubmiſſion, through conſtraint; not becauſe we are led truly to obſerve, acknowledge, and improve, the hand of the Lord; and the

heart

heart being bowed, through grace, to his will. But if it is through believing apprehenſions and views of what the Lord is, and has a right to do; and under a becoming ſenſe of our ſinfulneſs, and that in the midſt of all he is full of forbearance, and kindneſs, towards us: if we are deſirous under all to behold him as our covenant God, and to honour him as ſuch: if thus, from a knowledge of God, through Faith in him, and Love to him, perſuaded all he does is right, and well; if thus, from a ſenſe of duty and intereſt, and that God in all may appear from the heart acknowledged and honoured by us, we are ſtill under what he exerciſeth us with, or deprives us of; it is true ſubmiſſion, of which God ſhould have the glory.

Thirdly. And to conclude. Should we know, and conſider, the hand of the Lord under the moſt ſolemn bereaving diſpenſations of providence? let us be earneſt for divine ſupport under them and a ſanctified uſe of them. —— It is the Lord alone can uphold by his grace, and effectually teach to profit.

This may you continue to find, my dear friends, whom the Lord has touched in the moſt ſenſible manner; and who are mourning the loſs of a near, and juſtly beloved, RELATIVE. It is indeed, a Loss to YOU, to ME, to the CHURCH of CHRIST here; and, may I not add, a GENERAL Loss? under it the Lord alone can afford conſolation.

This, in rich abundance, may he grant unto you the MOURNING RELICT, and enable you to live upon his unchangeableneſs, all-ſufficiency, and faithfulneſs; particularly in the fulfilment of his many gracious promiſes made to the WIDOW, and the FATHERLESS; that you may humbly and firmly rely on them for the exerciſe of his paternal affection and care over you, and your dear children: for he cannot deny himſelf, he will be true to his own word. ———

All ſuitable ſupplies of grace may the Lord grant unto you his AFFECTIONATE MOTHER, BRETHREN, and other NEAR RELATIVES, that your chriſtian ſubmiſſion, under ſo ſolemn a providence, may be openly manifeſted to the honour of your God, and Redeemer. May you attend to this as God's voice in it: (a) 'Be ye therefore ready alſo, for the Son of man cometh at an hour 'when ye think not'. May you be enabled to live by faith upon, and take the comfort of, that gracious full promiſe. (b) 'Thy Sun ſhall no 'more go down, neither ſhall thy Moon with-'draw itſelf; for the Lord ſhall be thine everlaſt-'ing light, and the days of thy mourning ſhall 'be ended'.

It is in a particular manner a loud call to the MEMBERS of THIS CHURCH: may we hearken to it, and gain ſpiritual improvement, that we may be quickned to greater chriſtian diligence, and watchfulneſs; thus to honour the Lord by a converſa-

(a) Luke xii. 40. (b) Iſaiah lx. 20.

tion

tion becoming the Goſpel: and be more prepared for our own laſt and important change, knowing not how ſoon, or ſuddenly, it may take place. ——— Let me intreat you to remember, and follow, our deceaſed Chriſtian Brother, ſo far as he followed Chriſt; and particularly as to BROTHERLY LOVE. ———

I ſhould not therefore do juſtice to his MEMORY, was I not to take notice, whilſt thus addreſſing the members of the Church, that he was endued with a very amiable diſpoſition; BENEVOLENT, GENEROUS, and AFFECTIONATE: he loved to ſee all happy about him. BIGOTRY, and DISCORD, were his averſion. He breathed the ſpirit of LOVE, like JOHN the BELOVED DISCIPLE of JESUS; and was deſirous to promote peace among all with whom he was concerned.

In this reſpect let us be ambitious to follow him, deſirous to imbibe the ſame ſpirit, and to labor to promote it: that we may hope, when our work on earth is finiſhed, and we have our diſmiſſion, to join, with him, the kindred ſpirits above, where all is HARMONY, and LOVE. ——— Let us then conſider one another, to provoke unto LOVE, and GOOD WORKS; and ſo much the more, as reminded by this very awful PROVIDENCE, we ſee the DAY APPROACHING.

FINIS.

BRITISH
19 JY 77
MUSEUM